

GREENSBORO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Wednesday, February 8, 2006 – 4:00 pm
Council Chambers – 300 W. Washington Street

PRESENT: Robert Douglas, III, Marc Bush, Lori Galbreath, Rose Marie Ponton, Judi Rossabi, Randy Scott, Palmer Smith McIntyre, Cheryl Wilson

ABSENT: David Hoggard

STAFF PRESENT: Larry Barham, Candice Bruton, Mark Bush, Sue Davis, Ed Deaton, Dick Faucette, Courtney Hemphill, John Hughes, Bonnie Kuester, Dan Maxson, Marcie Richardson, Laurie Thore, Richard Wagner, Chris Wilson, Dale Wyrick (Field and Operations Department)

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the January 11, 2006 Commission Meeting were approved as submitted.

Recognition

Chris Wilson, Division Manager, acknowledged the attendance of Dr. Jim Sellers and Stephen Maynard, UNC-G Professors, Recreation, Parks and Tourism Management, along with UNC-G students.

Bonnie Kuester, Director, recognized the Parks and Recreation Employee of the Month for February, Sue Davis.

Kuester also recognized Larry Barham for receiving the Non-Sworn Ranger of the Year Award from the North Carolina Park Ranger Training Institute.

OLD BUSINESS

Athletic Advisory Board

John Hughes, Division Manager, stated that during the last Commission meeting, Commissioners were asked to create a sub-committee to review the reorganization of the Athletic Advisory Board (AAB), a board that has not been active since 2003. An AAB sub-committee was formed and created proposed AAB duties and revised the original AAB guidelines. Duties and recommendations to consider when appointing an AAB member were distributed to Commissioners previously to tonight's meeting. Hughes asked that each Commissioner appoint member to the AAB with anticipation of having this board established by March 2006.

Kuester stated the issues that come before the AAB need a different non-staff perspective as outlined in the guidelines. Kuester asked the Commission to submit their appointees within the next ten days.

Robert Douglas, III, Commissioner, stated that he was fortunate to serve on this board when it first started. This is a very valuable board as it serves as a liaison between the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Parks and Recreation Department serving mostly in an advisory capacity. Douglas stated that the board members should consist of diverse sports advocates to make certain the citizens have someone across the board that can represent them on this board.

Kuester stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission has a liaison to the AAB and the chair of the AAB will be encouraged to attend the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings. Citizens will present athletic concerns to the AAB, then if no resolution is made the concern will be brought forth to the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Memorial Stadium Update

Mark Bush, Division Manager, stated that within the last month the War Memorial Stadium Committee has been presented with a series of design concepts. The City Manager requested that the committee select three design scenarios. Bush stated that once input is gathered from the three concepts, the focus will then begin with cost estimates. The next meeting will be held February 13, 2006.

John Hughes, Division Manager, presented the three concepts. The first concept consists of more than one thousand five hundred seats. A portion of the left field seating section would become a mothball structure, which means remaining in its current state, and placing a fence around the area. The field would not be centered to seating as a field normally is. The second concept would consist of more than two thousand seats. A portion of the current left field seating section would be removed and become a mothball structure. The field would be centered to the seating area. The third concept would consist of more than two thousand five hundred seats. A portion of the current left field seating section would be removed and replaced with a plaza, a gate to the field, and a field security fence. This concept will have a park like front entrance setting, parking entrances on Lindsey Street and Boyd Street. Discussions are taking place to perhaps reduce Yanceyville Street from four lanes to two lanes.

Each concept shows the existing kitchen area removed and the removal of the Grand Stand.

Marc Bush, Commissioner, stated that he expects to see refinements of these conceptions at the next War Memorial Stadium Committee meeting. There is plenty discussion regarding the size of the seating and what is needed. Bush stated that what makes this a “doable” project is the whole concept of a stadium within a park. The growth of A&T and their plans of this growth coming towards War Memorial Stadium makes an opportunity for a very unique concept.

Richard Wagner, Project Specialist, Parks and Recreation, stated to the Commission that there are some things in common between these concepts that we can expect to see no matter which design is selected. These are: Memorial Plaza to remain in front of the stadium, the front arches will be maintained and restored, and keeping the historical designation. All concepts propose that the uncovered seating on first base side of the stadium will be removed and rebuilt to house new locker rooms. The current maintenance facility will be relocated.

Wagner stated that the parking capacity is two hundred spaces with additional parking within the surrounding neighborhood and parking availability at the Farmers Curb Market.

No date of construction completion has been determined.

At the request of Palmer Smith McIntyre, Commissioner, Kuester responded to an article published in the Rhinoceros Times stating that the city is indeed, as they have been all along, committed to this project (War Memorial Stadium project). The city would not be discussing at this level and involving such an active and committed group if it did not have serious plans to move forward. The Mayor was very vocal about the construction process of the new stadium and his commitment and the city’s commitment to War Memorial Stadium. It has been a landmark in this community and that will not change. It will change in terms of its usefulness and how we can use it now.

NEW BUSINESS

Proposed Capital Improvement Program

Candice Bruton, Planning Specialist, Parks and Recreation, stated that Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects are projects in excess of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000). These

projects consist of purchasing, constructing, renovating structures, and land acquisition projects. CIP is a financing, construction, and acquisition tool that helps the city address its capital and infrastructure over the course of the next six years. Parks and Recreation CIP projects are an outgrowth of our comprehensive master plan.

Bruton stated that during March 21, 2006 City Council meeting the public will have the opportunity to bring their perspective regarding any future bond referendums, not only in terms of Parks and Recreation but also for city wide initiatives and projects.

Bruton presented the following 2006 proposed recreation bond projects totaling \$29,766,000:

- Barber Park Master Plan Implementation - Phase I
 - sports pavilion
 - outdoor amphitheatre upgrades
 - community building
 - outdoor basketball complex
- Bryan Park at Guilford County - Phase I
 - Jointly owned City-County
 - Matching funds development
 - Infrastructure
 - Multi-purpose fields
- Brightwood Neighborhood Park
 - Playground
 - Trails
 - Improved Access
- Southwest Recreation Center Improvements
 - Park improvements (may include multi-purpose fields), to be determined in public design process in spring 2006
- Mini Park Development (one acre of land donated at Lee and Arlington Streets)
 - Beautification and park amenities
- Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Acquisition
 - Identified in Connections 2025.
 - Open Space
 - Parks
 - Significant woodland sites
 - Critical habitats
- Reedy Fork Recreation Center
- Skateboard Park
 - Citizen request seeking community partners
- Smith Senior Center Renovations
 - ADA accessible entrance
 - Locker rooms
 - Paved walking trail
 - Practice fields for Senior Games
- Teen Center
 - 18,000 sq. ft. joint use by GYC/Youth First
- Lake Townsend Marina
 - Repairs to 35-year old bulkhead
- Westerwood (Lake Dan) Park Renovation – Phase I
 - Renovation of neighborhood park
 - Community design effort to determine scope
 - Game courts

- Trails
- Replacement bridges
- Parking
- Playground
- War Memorial Stadium
- Indoor Climbing Wall

The following are 2009 proposed bond referendum projects totaling \$28,321,130:

- Artificial Turf Installation
 - Hester Park complex, 3 fields
- Parks, Open Space, and Greenways Acquisition – Phase II
 - Identified in Connections 2025
 - Open Space
 - Parks
 - Natural heritage areas
 - Woodland sites
 - Critical habitats
- Westerwood (Lake Dan) Park Renovation – Phase II
 - Renovation of neighborhood park
 - Game courts
 - Trails
 - Replacement bridges
 - Parking
 - Playground
- Bryan Park at Guilford County – Phase II
 - City/County matching funds
 - Expand trails
 - Athletic complex
 - Camping
 - Adventure center
- Northwest Neighborhood Park
 - Develop on existing site
 - Playground
 - Tables
 - Trail
- Brown Recreation Center Expansion
 - Citizen request and Master Plan recommendation
 - Classroom
 - Game room
- New Neighborhood Park
 - Develop existing site
 - Serving North Hills/Air Harbor area
 - Playground
 - Tables
 - Trail
- Price Park Development
 - Improved signage
 - Access
 - Beautification
 - Passive areas
- Tennis Court Repairs

- Citywide renovations
- City Swimming Pool Repairs
 - Maintenance to city pool infrastructure
 - Decking
 - Fencing
 - Drains
 - Equipment
- Gillespie Golf Course – Maintenance Facility
 - Alleviates crowded repair shop area and inadequate staff ready rooms
- Gillespie Golf Course
 - Construct restrooms on golf course
- Forest Lawn Cemetery
 - Facility for city staff and clients to meet regarding burial arrangements
 - Upgrade maintenance area
- Greensboro Sportsplex
 - Expand existing restrooms
 - Additional showers to accommodate evening/weekend use
- Bryan Park Soccer Field Renovation
 - Existing fields are 20+ years old
 - Address drainage and irrigation concerns
 - Re-establish turf on ten fields
- Grimsley High School Indoor Pool
 - Construct 1,200 sq. ft. program/class room
- Colonial Heritage Center – Tannenbaum Historic Park
 - Improvements include additional exhibit artifact space
 - Classroom
 - Walkways
- Fisher Park Trail Replacement
 - Replaces deteriorated walking trails
 - Addresses safety issues
 - Neighborhood request
- Camp Joy Improvements (Hagan-Stone Park)
 - Pave new entrance
 - Parking
 - Wheelchair paths
 - Fencing
 - Deck repairs
- Lindley Outdoor Pool
 - Renovations to maintain safe operating conditions
 - Recommended in 2002 Pool Study
- Grimsley High School Indoor Pool
 - Renovations recommended in 2002 Pool Study
- Greenhill Cemetery Maintenance Building
 - Project replaces inadequate cover for equipment
 - Staff ready room

Rose Marie Ponton, Commissioner, suggested that in addition to pool improvements the city needs to consider a larger swimming facility. Due to the length of time it takes to plan and construct, the time to plan is now. A large aquatic facility would be great for our city and the youth in our community.

Bruton and Kuester both informed the Commission that discussions throughout the community and other organizations have taken place and are ongoing regarding swimming facilities.

Judi Rossabi, Commissioner, requested that notices be distributed to those who utilize the Sportsplex informing them of the public forum at the March 21, 2006 City Council meeting.

Maxson informed the Commission that this week a committee reviewed requests for qualifications regarding Keeley Park. A consultant has been selected for the design phase. During spring 2006 we will be engaging the public on the design project.

Bruton informed the Commission that for citizens and neighborhood associations having neighborhood improvement requests may contact Housing and Community Development as this department administers the small neighborhood project program. Small neighborhood project applications can be submitted to Community and Housing Development in October of each year. Bruton encouraged citizens with requests to attend and present their requests and comments at the March 21, 2006 City Council meeting.

New Field and Operations Department

Dale Wyrick, Interim Director, Field and Operations Department, informed the Commission that this new Field and Operations Department concept was announced from the City Manager's Office in mid-January 2006. This department will combine like-operations into one department. This will affect Parks and Recreation (park maintenance division), Environmental Services, and the Department of Transportation. This new department will be implemented on March 1, 2006. Wyrick stated that since the announcement he has collaborated with affected departments on the transfer functions. A proposed Field and Operations Department structure has been submitted to the City Manager's Office. Discussions regarding the departmental changes are currently taking place with affected employees.

Wyrick continued stating that fifty-two of sixty-nine positions in the Park Maintenance Division will transfer to the new department. The transfer includes mowing crews, the landscaping crew, tree maintenance crew, spraying crew, and equipment mechanics. The transfer does not include staff at Keeley Nursery, the playground construction and maintenance crew, heavy equipment crew, and the program support crew.

The initial goals for the new department will be to maintain the city assets at the highest possible level utilizing existing departmental resources, create efficiencies through sharing of resources (storm response, right-of-way maintenance, leaf collection, etc) and to maintain or enhance relationships with affected community groups.

Douglas inquired about the funding for the new department and will money be allocated from Parks and Recreation to the new department.

Wyrick responded stating yes.

Mark Bush added that Brooks Mullane, current park maintenance division employee, will take charge of the remaining forces at park maintenance. No physical relocating of employees will take place and employees will continue to report to their current location. The athletic and turf crews will remain with the Parks and Recreation Department.

SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Dr. Jim Sellers, UNC-G Professor, Recreation, Parks and Tourism Management, thanked the Commission for recognizing the UNC-G staff and students in attendance.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Kuester stated that the citizenry input was a key piece in the CIP proposed project list. This type of input is important to the Parks and Recreation Department as well as the continued input of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Kuester reinforced to the Commission the need to give serious consideration to the appointees to the AAB.

Kuester announced the Open House at Peeler Recreation Center that will be held on February 26, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS

Cheryl Wilson commended the War Memorial Stadium Committee for their efforts on the War Memorial Stadium Project.

Robert Douglas, III stated that Greensboro should be proud of the Bryan Park soccer fields as this is a wonderful facility.

Marc Bush informed the Commission that the Greensboro Coliseum will be hosting the Women's ACC Tournament March 2-5, 2006, the Men's ACC Tournament March 9-12, 2006, and the NCAA Division I first and second rounds March 16-18, 2006.

With no further business, Douglas adjourned the meeting at 5:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marcie Richardson, Executive Assistant
Greensboro Parks and Recreation